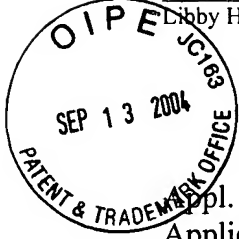


CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail on September 8, 2004 in an envelope addressed to Mail Stop RCE, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

Ref. No.: 12439-0138
P164-US



Libby Hill
Libby Hill

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Appl. No. : 10/003,012
Applicant : Benjamin N. Eldridge
Filed : November 2, 2001
TC/A.U. : 2829
Examiner : Vinh P. Nguyen

Confirmation No. 3257

Docket No. : 20206-15

Mail Stop RCE
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Sir:

Listed on an attached Form PTO/SB/08A is information known to applicant(s). Applicants ask that the attached Form PTO/SB/08A be initialed and returned in accordance with MPEP §609. This statement is not intended to represent that a search has been made or that the information cited in the statement is, or is considered to be, material to patentability as defined in §1.56.

COMMONLY OWNED, RELATED PATENTS AND APPLICATIONS

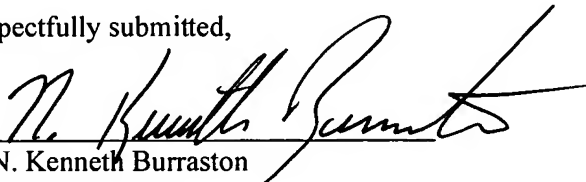
Applicants note that citation numbers 1, 2, and 8 in the attached listing are commonly owned with the above-identified patent application and may contain subject matter that is related to the subject matter of the above-identified patent application. The Examiner's attention is therefore directed to the prosecution history of the foregoing related patent(s) and patent application(s) and prior art cited in these patent(s) and patent application(s); Applicants assume that the Examiner has access to all of the prosecution history, including the cited prior art, of these patents(s) and patent application(s), but Applicants will provide copies of all or any part of the prosecution history of or prior art from any of these patent(s) or patent application(s) upon request.

- ☐ This statement is filed as one part of a multi-part submission. The fee for the complete submission was included in an electronically filed submission on _____. Applicants request the foregoing fee be accepted for this statement. (See OG Notice dated 17 September 2002.)
- ☒ This statement qualifies under 37 C.F.R. §1.97, subsection (b) because (check all that apply):
- ☐ (1) It is being filed within 3 months of the application filing date (other than the filing date of a continued prosecution application under §1.53(d)); or
 - ☐ (2) It is being filed within 3 months of entry of a national stage; or
 - ☐ (3) It is being filed before the mail date of the first Office Action on the merits; or
 - ☒ (4) It is being filed before the mail date of the first Office Action after the filing of a request for continued examination under §1.114.
- ☐ 37 C.F.R. §1.97(c). If this statement is being filed three months after the filing date of a national application or entry of the national stage in an international application and the mailing date of a first Office action on the merits but before the mailing date of the earlier of a final office action, a notice of allowance, or an action that otherwise closes prosecution in the application, then:
- ☐ a statement as specified in §1.97(e) is provided below; or
 - ☐ a fee of \$180.00 as set forth in §1.17(p) is authorized below, enclosed, or included with the payment of other papers filed together with this statement.
- ☐ 37 C.F.R. §1.97(d). If this statement is being filed after the mailing date of the earlier of a final office action under §1.113, a notice of allowance under §1.311, or an action that otherwise closes prosecution in the application, but before payment of the issue fee, then:
- A. a statement as specified in §1.97(e) is provided below; and
 - B. a fee of \$180.00 as set forth in §1.17(p) is authorized below, enclosed, or included with the payment of other papers filed together with this statement.

Fee:

- ☒ No fee is due.
- ☐ A check in the amount of \$_____ for the above-identified fee(s) is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

By 
N. Kenneth Burraston
Reg. No. 39,923

Date: September 8, 2004

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Modified Form PTO/SB/08A

Substitute for form 1449A/PTO INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT (use as many sheets as necessary)				<i>Complete If Known</i>	
				Application Number	10/003,012
				Filing Date	November 2, 2001
				First Named Inventor	Eldridge
				Group Art Unit	2829
				Examiner Name	Vihn P. Nguyen
Sheet	1	of	1	Attorney Docket No.	20206-15

U.S. PUBLISHED PATENT DOCUMENTS							
Examiner Initials*	Cite No. ¹	U.S. Patent Document		Name of Patentee or Applicant	Publ./Issue Date	Related [#]	Copy Enclosed
		Number	Kind Code ²				
	1.	2003/0085723		Martens et al.	5/8/2003	x	Yes
	2.	2003/0085724		Mathieu	5/8/2003	x	Yes
	3.	3963985		Geldermans	6/15/1976		Yes
	4.	5124639		Carlin et al.	6/23/1992		Yes
	5.	5604446		Sano	2/18/1997	.	Yes
	6.	5640101		Kuji et al.	6/17/1997		Yes
	7.	5936418		Ideta et al.	8/10/1999		Yes
	8.	5974662		Eldridge et al.	11/2/1999	x	Yes
	9.	6140828		Iino et al.	10/31/2000		Yes

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS								
Examiner Initials [*]	Cite No. ¹	Foreign Patent Document			Name of Patentee or Applicant	Publ. Date	T ⁶	Copy Enclosed
		Office ³	Number ⁴	Kind Code ⁵				
	10.	JP	09-5358		Fujimaki	1/10/1997		Yes

Examiner Signature		Date Considered	
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* EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication

¹Unique citation designation number. ²See attached Kinds of U.S. Patent Documents. ³Enter Office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). ⁴For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁵Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.16 if possible. ⁶Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language Translation is attached.

** Reference cited in parent application US Serial No. ____ 37 CFR § 1.98(d)

*** Pre-OG Notice By Deputy Commissioner Stephen G. Kunin dated July 11, 2003 waiving the requirement to file copies of US patent publications in applications filed after June 30, 2003.

Commonly owned US patent or application whose subject matter may be related to the subject matter of the instance patent application.